



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture

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USDA TO MEASURE PEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Even though the United States has the safest food supply in the world, questions are continually asked about the amount of chemicals applied to crops and livestock and their potential effects on farm workers and consumers. The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) may have a big impact on some of these pesticides, fumigants, and other chemicals available to you. The FQPA requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a review of pesticide products.

One item the EPA is researching is the adoption of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices on the nation's crop land. It includes the many ways insects, diseases, and weeds can be controlled while still yielding a profitable crop. Pest management practices are categorized into four areas: Prevention, Avoidance, Monitoring and Suppression (PAMS) of pest populations. To be qualified as IPM practitioners, growers should be practicing three or more of the PAMS components.

When news organizations, consumer groups, and government agencies question the use of pest management practices on American farms, it is to the farmers' advantage to have accurate, unbiased statistics describing actual application rates of agricultural chemicals and the use of IPM. Without accurate summary data, legislation and regulations affecting the use of agricultural chemicals may be based on biased evidence. Therefore, it is in the farmers' best interest that lawmakers and regulatory agencies at the local, state, and federal levels have access to accurate statistics.

In this, the final year of a four year study, the National Agricultural Statistics Services (NASS) will be contacting approximately 215 operators across New England. This survey will not only detail the types of IPM practices employed by agricultural producers, it will also measure the change from previous years. Beginning in mid-January, a telephone interviewer will contact each operator to ask for help in this nationwide effort. The study will continue throughout the first week in March.

As with all NASS survey work, individual operator information is kept strictly confidential and is even exempt from requests under the Freedom of Information Act. The National Agricultural Statistics Service will publish the results of this survey May 30, 2001.

[The New England Agricultural Statistics Service is a field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. It is located in Concord, NH, and is responsible for agricultural statistics for all six states in the region. The office can be reached at 1-800-642-9571 or through e-Mail at nass-nh@nass.usda.gov. All national statistics and state level newsletters are available through free e-mail subscriptions and on the Internet at www.usda.gov/nass/.]

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